

Indochina

Canada fully shares and endorses your recent statement on Indochina. We are now well into the eighth year of Vietnam's ongoing occupation of Cambodia and Vietnam continues to dominate Laos. Canadians are also most concerned at the continuing artillery attacks on civilian refugee camps along the Thai border and Vietnam's violation of Thailand's territorial sovereignty. The world deeply appreciates the collective efforts of ASEAN to bring about an equitable and peaceful settlement. I pledge Canada's continued support to this end, including financial support for the non-communist elements of the coalition government.

We urge the new Vietnamese leadership to demonstrate some willingness to work towards a meaningful peaceful settlement in Cambodia. Moscow must impress upon Vietnam's leaders that it is in their joint interest to adopt more flexible policies. No better test of Soviet intentions in this region can be provided than to see it exercise some of its known influence in Vietnam on the side of moderation and compromise.

I reiterate Canada's pledge not to provide development assistance to Vietnam while that country continues its aggression in Cambodia.

The real tragedy of Indochina is still measured in the thousands of people who continue to seek new lives beyond the reach of Hanoi. By foot and by boat, they continue to strive for safe refuge in neighbouring countries. Mr. Chairman, ASEAN's response to this human tragedy has been outstanding.

Canada has been closely associated with you in seeking both temporary and long-term durable solutions. We have contributed tens of millions of dollars to support refugees during their period of first asylum. As well, we have provided permanent homes in Canada for over one hundred thousand refugees from the region, and you have my commitment we will play an active part in the future.

In trying to develop more durable solutions to the influx of thousands of people who arrive on your shores and across your borders, Canada will continue to work together with Australia, Japan and the United States in the International Contact Group. I am hopeful that, in the near future, we will be able to provide the UNHCR with an agreed paper on possible longer term initiatives that could be undertaken. We will, of course, want to share our proposals with you. Through cooperation and collaboration, we must seek a more comprehensive response to the problem of Indochinese refugees.